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## TYPES OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

The various types of children's books include:

- Picture books.
- Information books.
- Folk tales and adventure books.
- Books on humour and fantasy.
- Books for personal and social development.
- Poetry books.
- Books for special interest, e.g. "how to" books.

## CATEGORIES OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Children's books selected can be categorized into three groups:

1. Pre-reading materials
2. Story books for beginning readers (Primary 1 and 2)
3. Intermediate Reading level (Primary 3 and 4).

## 1. **Pre-reading material:**

a. **Picture Book:** A picture book does not have stories. It is designed to talk to children through parents or picture. There are normally no written words to accompany the pictures. It is the simplest book for a child to start to learn how to read.

b. **Wordless Story Book:** A wordless storybook teaches the child that we have a beginning and an end to a story. And that we also read from left to right. The pictures are not accompanied by written words. The books follow a sequence. The child is asked to name the pictures if possible tell a story in sequences.

c. **Story Book to be Read to the Child:** A storybook to be read to a child has both words and pictures. The book is written in simple English with just a few sentences. For example, the teacher should include one or two sentences on a page. The teacher, parents and other caregivers are advised to read such a book to the child.

## 2. **Story Books for Beginners (Primary 1 and 2)**

By the time the child enters class 1, he is supposed to be a beginning reader. At this time he is supposed to have identified enough vocabularies to enable him to start to read. This type of book is

designed especially for children between ages 6 and 7 years who are just beginning to learn to read. It uses only words and simple sentence patterns, which are already familiar to the child. This type of books helps the child to understand himself and others as well as life in general. This type of books also helps teachers and parents to get a better understanding of their roles and functions.

**a. Characteristics of a Good Beginning Reading Book**

The book uses a few words and repeats familiar language patterns often, introducing few new words at a time. The vocabulary used in the book is appropriate for the child's age.

- The book should have stories that are familiar to the child.
- The readability level of the book must be appropriate to the child's age. That is, the readability level of the book must be determined before writing such a book.
- Such a book must take into consideration the child's interest at that age. If you have a child that you are very much familiar with, you can develop a book taking his interest into consideration.
- The book must take into consideration the child's cultural experiences.
- Topics treated in the book must take into consideration the child's age, interest,

background, experiences and have many pictures accompanied by very simple sentences.

- The writer/author must be very original and natural.

### **b. Characteristics of a Good Beginning Reading Book for The Handicapped.**

The child is handicapped as a result of a disability, which has led to his handicapping condition, for example, visual problem or hearing problem. This loss has made the child handicapped to some extent by restricting his ability to see or hear. However, the child could be made less handicapped. For example, you can Braille your notes if you are blind. If you acquire mobility stick and you can use it properly that will enable you to move from place to place without much problem. If you don't hear, you can be less handicapped if you can communicate using sign language.

It is, therefore, possible that the handicapped child may be older than the normal child when he learns how to read. The handicapped child's reading book must be interesting to an older reader even though it is supposed to be simply written.

Handicapped children's books should be selected carefully and you should use vocabulary that reflects the actual language used by children. Keep in mind the child's handicapping condition and his language development.

If the story is for the consumption of a visually handicapped child, such a story should be brailled with

raised diagrams. Note that the experiences of the handicapped children could be restricted as much as possible. As such, the story should be carefully written, selecting vocabulary that will reflect the experiences of an handicapped child.

### **3. Intermediate Level Reading Books (Primary 3 and 4).**

The story at this level may be fiction or non-fiction (true story).

Presently in Nigeria, most people associate reading with only fiction. Most story books seen in bookshops apart from textbooks are fictional. Fiction storybooks should ensure that the characters talk. Reflect a child's viewpoint. This could include folktales, etc. The non-fiction storybooks could treat topics such as information about animals, and handicapping conditions and coping strategies.